

2008 Severe Weather Fact Sheet

National Weather Service Lincoln, IL

Hazardous Weather Impacts

- The most storm-related fatalities in the United States, over the past 30 years, have been attributed to floods (average of 99 each year); followed by lightning (62), and tornadoes (54).
- Tornadoes in Illinois have killed 202 people, and injured nearly 4,100 since 1950.
- Average annual damage from tornadoes, hurricanes and floods in the U.S. is about \$14 billion.

Central / Southeast Illinois Severe Weather Statistics

- Since 2003, **81%** of all severe weather events (*damaging winds, tornadoes and large hail*) in central and southeast Illinois had advance warning by the NWS in Lincoln, with an **average lead time of 17 minutes**.
- The **peak** of our severe weather season extends from **March 20th through September 3rd**.
- During the 10 year period from 1998 through 2007, severe weather has occurred six times on two calendar dates: **May 31st and August 18th**.
- Of the top 15 counties with the most tornadoes in the state, 10 are in central or eastern Illinois. These are:

Logan (ranked #2), McLean (#3), Sangamon (#4), Tazewell (#5), Woodford (#7), Macon (#10), Champaign (#11), Piatt (#12), Douglas (#13), Coles (#14).

[Data based on tornadoes per 100 square miles from 1950-2007]

- More than 2,780 volunteer weather spotters were trained in 30 central and eastern Illinois counties last year. More than 1,000 were new trainees.

Economic Impacts of Weather Forecasts & Warnings

- The cost of NWS services for the average central or southeast Illinois household is only about \$7.50 per year. (*Based on NWS and Census Bureau statistics*)
- NWS Implementation of storm based warnings for smaller areas, and portions of counties, will result in a 70% reduction in false alarms. It is projected that this improvement will save U.S. businesses and the public nearly \$100 million in sheltering costs each year (e.g. lost business, lost productivity, etc...).
- Thirty-three percent (33%) of the U.S. Gross Domestic Product, nearly \$3 trillion, is affected by weather and National Weather Service forecasts.
- Economists have estimated that improved *El Nino/La Nina* forecasts have resulted in annual savings of nearly \$300 million for U.S. agriculture by altering planting decisions.

The National Weather Service mission:

The National Weather Service provides weather, hydrologic, and climate forecasts and warnings for the United States, its territories, adjacent waters and ocean areas, for the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy. The NWS is the sole United States OFFICIAL voice for issuing warnings during life-threatening weather situations.

Visit our Internet homepage at: www.weather.gov/Lincoln for the latest weather and river forecasts, warnings, current conditions, radar & satellite imagery, and climate information.